

RATTLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 30th July 2024 at 19:30 in Rattlesden Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Tony Edwards (Chair), Cllr. Sarah Osborne (Deputy), Cllr. Steve Atkinson, Cllr. Paul Bradnam, Cllr. Dan Jewers.

In Attendance: County Cllr. Penny Otton, District Cllr. Nicky Willshire, Parish Clerk Nick Skelhorn and two members of the public.

Absences: Apologies received from Cllr. Russell Morley.

2024/089 **Declarations of Interest**
None to declare.

2024/090 **Minutes of the Last Parish Council Meeting**
It was collectively resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 26th June 2024 be approved as a true record of events save a minor amend to entry 2024/086 to state that a record of the Ofsted Inspection Report will 'be available in due course'.

2024/091 **Public Comment and Questions on Agenda Items**
Following phone calls to the Chair and Clerk, members of the public in attendance presented their concerns about the ongoing use of Anglian Water land behind the Pavilion for bonfires and the negative impacts this was having on their adjacent property. Cllr. Edwards confirmed the limited ability the Council had to act given the issue was a civil matter on third-party land, but that the Council would again seek intervention by Anglian Water by reporting the issue to their Estate's team. Cllr. Goodlad noted action was required given the area was increasingly being utilised by multiple trades as a 'dumping ground' for garden waste. An entry in Revelations making people aware of the issue was also proposed.

2024/092 **County Councillor's Report**
The Council received Cllr. Otton's report which confirmed that 1) the white parking restrictions adjacent to the drop curbs on Lower Road were now in place, 2) that further overnight closures on the A14 (slip roads) were planned and 3) that a major diversion was in place on the A1088 between Woolpit and Ixworth to afford bridge works. Cllr. Otton also confirmed she was still seeking feedback on a potential .gov.uk domain name for the Council and that she was flowing required remedial action following recent verge cutting (grass covering grit bin etc.). Cllr. Otton finally requested that the Council assist in advertising the urgent need for foster carers, and confirmation of any nominations for the Community Award / Councillor Awards.

2024/093 **District Councillor's Report**
The Council received Cllr. Willshire's report. An update was provided on the planned remedial works to St. Nicholas' Close and details of a planned visit of senior Councillors to the Ward to engender a better understanding of issues 'on the ground' was shared. Cllr. Atkinson queried if funding was still available for electric vehicle charging ports which was positively confirmed.

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2024/094 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

094.1 'Minute 076 **'County Councillor's Report'**: Cllr. Otton confirmed that the parking restriction lines had now been installed.

094.2 'Minute 081 **'Waste Bins'**: No response has yet been received from SCC / BMSDC about the provision of dual use stickers / relocation of the Poy Street bin.

094.3 'Minute 084 **'It Software Options'**: Options are still being considered.

094.4 'Minute 085 **'Highways Verges'**: One quotation has been obtained (£2,733.60 +VAT) to cut all Parish verges. Additional written quotations are being sought.

2024/095 Planning

95.1 July Applications: DC/24/03014 (Listed Buildings Consent - Brook Vale Farmhouse). The Council confirmed they had no objections via email given the consultation deadline.

095.2 Applications Approved/Rejected in June: Application DC/24/01957 (Suffolk House to remove existing gates and create off-road parking) was granted on 7th July 2024; Application DC/24/02567 (The Nest, 8 Birds Green to conduct internal alterations in a Listed Building) was granted on 25th July 2024.

2024/096 Finance

096.1 Financial Report: The Clerk's financial report up to the 30th June 2024 was received. The current account balance stood at £66,240.17 and the deposit accounts at £46,354.42, of which £70,311.13 represented CIL funds. The Clerk, with reference to his July Financial Report, confirmed the high current account balance reflected a part transfer of CIL funds from the old TSB deposit account to the new Dudley Deposit account, the funds having now cleared at the time of the meeting. The Clerk also reiterated that general and CIL reserves remained high and that strategies should be considered to utilise funds appropriately. The Clerk also noted that given reserves were collectively more than £100,000 the creation of an investment strategy should be considered. Commentary was also provided on the year-to-date budget, noting the negative variances in Grounds and Fixed Asset accounts reflected planned overspend to reduce reserves.

096.2 Payments Schedule: The schedule of payments for July 2024 was approved totalling £2,468.76. There was no notable expenditure for comment.

096.3 Annual Governance Statement, Accounts and Budget: The Clerk confirmed receipt of the signed Internal Audit Report which he shared and presented Sections 1 and 2 of the final draft Annual Governance Statement Report for review and signature which were collectively approved and signed.

Should a member of the public wish to view any supporting documentation in relation to the above please contact the Rattlesden Parish Clerk.

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2024/097

Ground's Works

The Clerk presented quotes received for various works (benchmarking grass cutting costs around the Rattlesden Airfield Memorial - £30/cut quote received, and grass cutting surrounding St. Nicholas' Close – two quotes of £125/cut and £240/cut respectfully). The Council collectively resolved to approve the quotation received for memorial maintenance given a £20/visit cost saving could be achieved, and collectively approved the £125/cut at St. Nicholas on the proviso this could be deployed on an ad-hoc basis opposed to a set schedule of cuts.

2024/098

Bus Shelter / Bottle Bank Renewal

The clerk presented details of the finalised Bus Shelter / Bottle bank designs for Council Review which were approved. Initial quotes were shared, and the Clerk confirmed he was seeking additional quotations to ensure best value. Cllr. Jewers questioned how frequently the bus shelter was utilised. Cllr. Edwards confirmed the area was often used as a shelter for passing cyclists / hikers and by children waiting for the school bus in term time in addition to those using the contracted bus service.

2024/099

Tree Works

The Clerk presented previously circulated quotations for work to trees on Council Common Land (i.e. removing deadwood / overhanging limbs that presented a danger and lifting of the willow canopy at Whalebone Green – two quotes obtained at £468 and £480 respectfully, with one party refusing to quote). The Council resolved to proceed with the cheaper quote based on cost and having had a positive experience working with the individual in question previously.

2024/100

Jubilee Field

Cllr. Atkinson summarised his previously circulated reports, which included details of the historic use / development of the gifted land (primarily tree planting with varying success) and a number of ideas going forward to maximise the use of the space for community benefit. (i.e. picnic benches, exercise equipment). Various other ideas were circulated amongst Councillors including additional volunteer planting, planting fewer, but larger more establish trees and/or areas of wildflower. Cllr. Atkinson is to take proposed ideas, formulate a strategy and report back to the Council.

2024/101

Locality Funding

The Council considered and noted potential uses for the Locality budget for Council (i.e. additional sandbags and storage, river dredging) and other village interest group schemes.

2024/102

Rattlesden Church of England Primary Academy

Cllr. Atkinson confirmed there was nothing to report this month.

2024/103

Rolling Review of Council Policies – 10 Date and Records Retention

The document was reviewed, and it was concluded that it remained proportionate and appropriate and it was approved in its current form.

2024/104

Matters to be Brought to the Attention of the Council

104.1 Allotments – Cllr. Bradnam confirm he was continuing to receive interest in the new Jubilee Allotments and outlined plans to progress occupation once the legal transfer of land completes.

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104.2 Memorial oaks, cemetery – Cllr. Goodlad confirmed three of the memorial Oaks planted in the Council owned cemetery had died. It was collectively agreed that up to £150 could be spent on their replacement.

104.3 Council Storage – Cllr. Edwards proposed approaching BMSDC about utilising a now defunct boiler room adjacent to the village shop for Council storage, specific for sandbags / flood equipment due to its central location and high ground. The Clerk was tasked with engaging BMSDC to investigate options.

104.4 – Bus Timetable Holders – Cllr. Edwards suggested two notice / timetable holders be procured and erected in the village's bus shelters to provide a more formal location for timetables, to a) prevent them getting blown away and b) damaging the structure when affixed. A budget up to £20 was agreed and approved.

2024/105

Next Meeting:

The date and time of the next meeting is TBC given limited availability of the Clerk in September. There is no meeting in August.

The meeting closed at 21:48

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